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Peter Heslin,
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Peter Heslin's basic point is that art, texts, and life interact with each other without one being automatically superior to the others. The Romans lived in a world that was rich both visually and textually, and intertextuality operated between media. A work of visual art could be affected by political considerations, for instance, and might influence writers who were also affected by politics and who might in turn influence other works of art. Literature did not provide a master-text to be merely illustrated, secondarily, by paintings or sculptures.

Stated in such plain terms, the thesis would seem unexceptionable, at least for texts and visual art in the modern world, when we could often document the various influences. Heslin demonstrates, however, that his thesis has not always been accepted by modern scholars of ancient art and literature. In trying to prove his point he confronts the problem that dogs so many studies of antiquity: simple lack of evidence, whether measured in volume or in completeness.

For his main test case, Heslin turns to the portico of Philippus in Rome, erected by a relative of Augustus around the earlier Republican temple of Hercules of the Muses. This choice could appear paradoxical, since the portico is lost. Practically all we know about its decoration comes from the Elder Pliny, who says that it contained Trojan paintings. To reconstruct the paintings, Heslin draws on the (redated) portico of the Temple of Apollo in Pompeii, which itself contained paintings of the Trojan War. Those paintings, too, are lost today. After they were excavated in 1817, they went unprotected and were soon destroyed by the elements, but not before several people made sketches or illustrations of various types, some more detailed than others, some more focused on the paintings, some touching on the paintings only incidentally. Heslin works from electronically enlarged versions of those illustrations to try to reconstruct the now-lost paintings in the Temple of Apollo in Pompeii, with the goal, in turn, of illuminating the completely lost paintings in the Portico of Philippus in Rome. He gets some help from some private domestic paintings of the Trojan War in Pompeii, which he argues were influenced by, though not necessarily copied from in a purely literal sense, the public paintings in the Temple of Apollo, which, he argues, were influenced by the paintings in the Portico of Philippus. In

other words, he uses the Temple of Apollo to reconstruct the Portico, which he argues influenced the temple. This is circular, but it may be all there is to work with, given the absence of evidence.

Heslin is not content, however, to discuss works of visual art influencing each other. He goes on to argue that the Portico of Philippus, which surrounded the Temple of Hercules of the Muses, which was said to house the guild of poets, was, together with the Temple of Palatine Apollo and its Greek and Latin libraries, part of a larger Augustan project in Rome to recreate the Alexandrian Museum. That recreation, however, could not be in a single building, which would have offended Roman sensibilities. The original Temple of Hercules of the Muses, he notes, was associated with Fulvius Nobilior, who was connected to Ennius, the author of the *Annales*, the Roman epic. By enclosing the temple with the Portico and its Trojan paintings, then, Augustus's relative, presumably under the direction of Augustus and as part of his overall plan, was literally enclosing Ennius and bluntly challenging the poets of Rome to supersede Ennius' *Annales* and encouraging them to turn to Aeneas and the Trojan War as their subject. Art, literature, and politics interacted at the site of the Portico enclosing the Temple and in the works of the Augustan poets. Vergil, in Heslin's analysis, does write that new Roman epic. The Augustan poet even includes a scene in which Aeneas looks at paintings of the Trojan War in the Temple of Juno in Dido's Carthage. In fact, Heslin argues, Aeneas misreads those paintings, a misreading to which Heslin contends Vergil's readers would have been sensitive because they would have known that Juno's temple would have included Trojan paintings that Aeneas did not mention because he did not understand them, since he, contrary to Vergil's readers, had not read Homer.

Heslin's argument is speculative throughout. Assumptions, both large and small, become the basis for other assumptions, but Heslin builds his case in extreme detail and as meticulously as possible. Even if the reader is not fully convinced by every step of the analysis, he or she can profit from following Heslin through the ruins of Pompeii to a lost Portico in Rome and the poets it may have challenged.

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